



# Department of Justice

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## **MONTANA MAN SENTENCED FOR RECEIPT OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

BILLINGS – Benjamin Leo Zarn, a 34-year-old resident of Great Falls, was sentenced today to a term of 60 months in federal prison after having been found guilty after a 1-day trial of receipt of child pornography. Zarn was also ordered to pay a special assessment of \$100 and will be under supervision for 5 years.

At trial, the government presented evidence of the following:

In May 2007, Northwestern Energy (NWE) determined that two company computers had been used to acquire child pornography via the Internet. Both computers were located in a NWE business office located in Lewistown.

Further investigation revealed that entry into the NWE office in Lewistown was controlled by a computerized card key system. NWE employees, as well as employees of a janitorial service, were assigned individual key cards to acquire building access. NWE computers were also password protected with individual user accounts. However, on occasion, NWE employees would forget to log off their individual accounts at the end of a work day.

Comparison of NWE key card logs, as well as the Internet history of the computers found with child pornography on them suggested that Zarn was responsible for the illegal activity. Zarn was an employee of a janitorial business that provided the night janitorial services for NWE. The log data showed that on multiple occasions during late night hours, Zarn entered the NWE building when no other individuals were present. During those times, Zarn used the two computers to receive child pornography from various Internet web sites.

Forensic examination of the two NWE computers confirmed the presence of child pornography images contained in temporary Internet files, consistent with receiving images via the Internet. The date and time stamps associated with the images were consistent with the key card data identifying Zarn as the person in the building.

On November 27, 2007, Zarn was interviewed. He confessed to using the NWE computers to receive child pornography via the Internet. Zarn also reported that he had used two additional computers belonging to his father to receive child pornography via the Internet. Child pornography images were found on both computers.

The investigation was a cooperative effort between the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the

Lewistown Police Department, the Montana Division of Criminal Investigation, and the Billings Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Marcia K. Hurd prosecuted the case.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Department of Justice launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov/](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov/).

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